

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 870

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USIA WASHDC

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TAGS: PINT PFOR DA

SUBJ: REACTION TO AMBASSADOR'S PROTEST REGARDING PRIME
MINISTER JORGENSEN'S VIETNAM STATEMENT

REF: COPENHAGEN 1282

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR'S PROTEST TO PRIME MINISTER MAY 2
RECEIVED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE IN MOST DANISH DAILY
PAPERS. WITH EXCEPTION OF PREDICTABLE LEFT WING
REACTION, THE TONE AND TREATMENT OF THE COVERAGE WAS
POSITIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESS COVERAGE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRIME
MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN TO DELIVER A PROTEST OVER THE
LATTER'S CRITICAL COMMENTS REGARDING THE US ROLE IN
VIETNAM WAS EXTENSIVE AND WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS POSITIVE.
THE LARGE QUALITY DAILES BERLINGSKE TIDENDE, POLITIKEN AND
JYLLANDS POSTEN ALL FEATURED THE STORY ON THE FRONT PAGE
UNDER HEADINGS: "ANGER IN USA OVER ANKER JORGENSEN",
"SHARP USA PROTEST TO ANKER", AND "US DISSATISFIED WITH
PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS", RESPECTIVELY. PRESS ACCOUNTS
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REPORTED MERELY THE FACT THAT DEMARCHE HAD TAKEN PLACE AS

NEITHER EMBASSY'S NOR MFA'S PRESS RELEASE DISCLOSED
SUBSTANCE OF AMBASSADOR'S PROTEST. BOTH RELEASES
CHARACTERIZED THE PROTEST AS "SHARP".

2. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY PAPER AKTUELT BURIED THE
STORY IN MIDDLE PAGES MAY 3 AND PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW WITH JORGENSEN MAY 4 UNDER HEADING "THERE MUST
NOT BE TOO MUCH DISTANCE BETWEEN WHAT ONE SAYS AND WHAT
ONE MEANS". IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION WHETHER HIS
PERSONAL VIEWS WERE ALWAYS THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION,
JORGENSEN SAID IN THE INTERVIEW THAT THE BASIC
STANDPOINT HE HAD EXPRESSED
IN HIS REMARKS ON THE VIETNAM SITUATION WAS THE
OFFICIAL POSITION OF BOTH THE PRESENT AND THE PREVIOUS
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS. ASKED AGAIN WHETHER THE
US BORE THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENTS
(IN VIETNAM) IN RECENT YEARS, JORGENSEN STATED: "I
BELIEVE THAT IN THE US THERE HAVE BEEN FORCES WHICH
FROM AN IDEALISTIC POINT OF VIEW HAVE DESIRED TO DEFEND
A LITTLE COUNTRY AGAINST COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP AND,
ACTING ON THE BASIS OF THIS POINT OF VIEW, IT WAS
POSSIBLE TO PLACE THE ENTIRE AMERICAN MILITARY MACHINE
AT ITS HIGHEST DEGREE OF READINESS; BUT WHAT WAS NOT
SUFFICIENTLY EVALUATED (IN THE US) WAS WHETHER THE
POPULAR MOVEMENT (IN SOUTH VIETNAM) IN AND OF ITSELF
COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS A COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP AND,
IN PARTICULAR, WHETHER THAT WHICH ONE DEFENDED
WAS WORTHY OF BEING DEFENDED. . . .

"BUT INSTEAD OF FIGHTING OVER A WAR WHICH IS
FINISHED, LET US IN A COOPERATIVE WAY CONCENTRATE ON
HOW WE NOW CAN BEST BE OF ASSISTANCE. AND LET US NOT
FORGET THAT A MAN SUCH AS SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS
CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO DETENTE BETWEEN, RESPECTIVELY,
THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION AND THE US AND CHINA. WE
SHOULD NOT LOOK BACKWARDS BUT MAKE A CONTRIBUTION
LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE."

3. PREDICTABLE NEGATIVE COVERAGE OF THE DEMARCHE
APPEARED IN THE COMMUNIST "LAND OG FOLK" WEEKEND EDITION
UNDER HEADING "USA" 'CORRECTS' ANKER JORGENSEN". AFTER
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CITING FACT THAT JORGENSEN HAD DEFENDED HIS STATEMENT BY
SAYING IT WAS "NATURAL AMONG FRIENDS TO EXPRESS ONE'S
VIEWS", THE PAPER CONCLUDED WITH OBSERVATION THAT "THE
US CLEARLY HAS A DIFFERENT OPINION ABOUT THAT".

4. ELSTRA BLADET, POLITIKEN'S AFTERNOON TABLOID, WAS
EXTREMELY NEGATIVE. STORY WAS CARRIED UNDER HEADING
"ANDER NOT FRIGHTENED OF KISSINGER'S WATCHDOG". AS AN

EDITORIAL, THE PAPER FABRICATED A PROPOSED "DEAR HENRY" LETTER FROM JORGENSEN TO KISSINGER. THE LETTER CONCLUDED "YOU CAN PROTEST AND PUT PRESSURE ON ME AND ON MY GOVERNMENT BUT NEVERTHELESS THE SIMPLE TRUTH REMAINS - IT WAS THE DEMOCRATIC USA WHICH SUPPORTED CORRUPTION AND ABUSE OF POWER. IT WAS THE DEMOCRATIC USA WHICH SOUGHT TO BOMB A POOR COUNTRY BACK INTO THE STONE AGE. IT WAS THE DEMOCRATIC USA WHICH ALLIED ITSELF WITH REACTIONARY PUPPETS. IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM? NO, IN THE NAME OF OPPRESSION AND TERROR."

5. IN CONTRAST, EDITORIAL IN BERLINGSKE TIDENDE MAY 4 STATED: "IT HAS PROBABLY BEEN A SURPRISE TO MANY THAT THE USA HAS PROTESTED AGAINST PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN'S STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM AND THE US. HAVEN'T THE AMERICANS LEARNED THAT ANKER JORGENSEN'S FOREIGN POLITICAL STATEMENTS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY?... THE COMMOTION AROUND PRIME MINISTER'S VIETNAM COMMENTARY WILL NOT DO DANISH FOREIGN POLICY ANY GOOD. FOREIGN MINISTER K.B. ANDERSEN IS SPEAKING AND TRAVELLING MUCH TO STRENGTHEN THE GOOD IMPRESSION (OF DENMARK). BUT HE DOES NOT EXACTLY HAVE A REPUTATION AS A GREAT DIPLOMAT EITHER, AND IT WOULD BE UNDESERVED IF HE HAD. THE PRIME MINISTER'S SLIP REFLECTS ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER AS WELL, EVEN IF THE LATTER HAS NOT BEEN ASKED.

"OUR USUALLY MODEST, BUT NOT ALWAYS UNESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NOBLE ART OF DIPLOMACY DURING NEGOTIATIONS ABROAD ARE LOST WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER PUTS HIS FOOT IN IT. THEREFORE HIS 'FRANK' URGE TO VOICE HIS CANDID OPINION ON FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS SHOULD BE EXPRESSED SILENTLY IN THE FUTURE. BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT K.B. ANDERSEN IS THE PERSON TO TEACH HIM THAT ART."

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6. THE PRESS HAS ALSO REPORTED SEVERAL FAVORABLE COMMENTS BY DANISH NON-SOCIALIST POLITICIANS, EXPRESSING THEIR UNDERSTANDING FOR US IRRITATION OVER JORGENSEN'S REMARKS. CROWE

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